



**All Saints  
Reconciliation  
Journey**

**2018**

## **Message from the Rev David Fuller, Vicar**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2013 we conducted a ceremony of welcome to country by a Wurundjeri elder Auntie Dianne. Our Archbishop, Dr Philip Freier was present and later spoke at a fundraising lunch. The proceeds of the lunch went to the Bush Church Aid Indigenous prison chaplain and evangelist, Grant Hay, working in the Diocese of Willochra. We continue to support Grant financially and prayerfully. A plaque, close to the entrance of our Church was unveiled that afternoon. It reads;

*We acknowledge under God the Wurundjeri People as the traditional custodians of the land we meet on, and pay our respects to their elders past and present.*

What follows below is the work of the Biblical Justice Group and a small sub-committee. I thank God for their commitment and dedication to this particular issue.

## **Our History – Our Problem**

All Saints has been on a journey for several years to understand what our relationship with Indigenous people should look like. We are seeking to answer the question: why as a church should we be concerned about Reconciliation with Indigenous people? We didn't steal the land. We didn't kill Indigenous people. We didn't remove the children. So, who has benefitted from the stealing of the land during colonisation and the accompanying loss for Indigenous people of livelihood, culture and language? Every Australian. The wealth of Australia was built on their loss of land, resulting in a wound at the heart of our nation that still waits to be healed.

Christians are people of reconciliation and healing. We have been reconciled to God through Christ. As the apostle Paul puts it “... *God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them*” [Romans 5:10]

Reconciliation with God is an essential part of being a Christian. Christians are reconciled to the Creator God who created everything and gave it to humans to care for. Flowing from this is the fact that we need to be reconciled to other people. We are to live out our reconciliation in Christ by following his command to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. This includes the Wurundjeri and all Indigenous people. We live and worship on land that was taken from the Wurundjeri people without their consent or any recompense.

## Our Promise

Throughout the history of the church there have been Christians who reached out to other people in love and sought to overcome the barriers and injustices confronting them, and to be reconciled with their neighbours. This is living out the teaching of Jesus and is what Biblical justice is about.

***We will reach out to right the injustices, help heal the wound and be reconciled with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.***

## The 5 R's

The 5 R's provide a pathway for us to be **reconciled** with our Indigenous sisters and brothers:

<b>Response</b>	<b>Which means</b>
<b>Recognize</b>	This involves knowledge and acceptance of the historical facts, and an understanding of their consequences. We had a service of recognition in 2013 when the plaque was placed on the wall and Wurundjeri elder Aunty Dianne was present.
<b>Express regret</b>	As we learn, we may feel regret, and lament the pain and suffering experienced by a people-group loved by God.
<b>Repent</b>	Like the younger son in the parable, are we able to say: "We have sinned against God & against you. Forgive us for our ignorance ... for the disrespect, abuse and cruelty committed while we were looking the other way ..."
<b>Make Restitution</b>	There are many acts of restitution open to a Christian community wishing to follow the example of Zacchaeus who, motivated not by guilt but by the desire to right many wrongs, acted justly and with mercy, walking humbly with his God.
<b>Rejoice</b>	Celebrate how Indigenous people have enriched our lives and culture

## Our Plan

Some of the ways in which we will seek to learn and respond in 2018 are:

<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>When</i></b>
January to March	Share Australians Together DVDs across all services
Saturday 14th April	Visit to Gara Wurundjeri Trail (Watsons Creek)
Sunday 29th April	Visit from Neville Naden (Bush Church Aid Indigenous Officer)
26th & 27th May	Focus on Reconciliation Week in Services including National Sorry Day
8th to 15th July	Celebrate Indigenous people and culture in NAIDOC week
Oct (TBC)	Tour with Koorie Heritage Trust

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